

May 13, 1975

SENATOR JOHNSON: Mr. President, members of the Legislature. I agree with the remarks that Senator Koch, Lewis and Dworak have made in favor of the SUN program. I just want to make one comment. Senator Murphy indicated that this might be in competition with existing higher education institutions but it is not. The facts show that most of the people that are registered for these courses are people that are house-makers, they are older people they are people that will not attend other institutions and so this offers them an ideal way of getting them a better education and I think that it is very worthwhile.

PRESIDENT: Senator Cavanaugh.

SENATOR CAVANAUGH: I've got an amendment there to my amendment, which would insert the words "Headquarters of" for Senator Lewis' benefit and for clarification of the amendment. One of the reasons for this is not at all the primary reason is not at all preclude the legitimate delivery of SUN of the SUN program. This precludes the establishment of another full scale campus funded by state tax dollars in the state of Nebraska. The justification relative to headquarters is from a letter which I received from President Varner in response to a letter of mine on December 11, 1974, in which I asked the question what existing functions of SUN WILL be relocated in Beatrice, which the reply was, "it is contemplated that if the University of Mid-America is funded as we hope and believe it will be by federal and private foundation sources, the state wide delivery activity will be a very sizeable operation, requiring physical facilities which are currently not available on the Lincoln campus. The alternative would be to rent space in the Lincoln community and it has been our hope that the SUN headquarters could be located at Beatrice and utilize the facilities made available through the Pershing gift offer." Now, it is well to keep in mind that the Pershing gift offer, contrary to testimony provided by President Varner to the Miscellaneous Subjects Committee on February 8, 1973, was made without any consultation prior knowledge, prior notification, or concurrence by this legislature. President Varner testifying on LB179 before the Miscellaneous Subjects Committee on February 8, 1973 stated, "I'm here representing the University of Nebraska Board of Regents of the University speaking in favor of the Senate Bill 179. In the course of the past two years the University has been asked on several occasions about its possible interest in taking over the facilities of Hiram Scott and the subsequently the Pershing College facility. In each a case we have tried to make it clear that our interest is only if the Legislature, the Governor, feel that there is some legitimate purpose which the University could put these facilities and if we could make some useful contribution." Well that was that statement in 73 that was not abided by in 74, because no one in the legislature was ever consulted prior to the actions of the Board of Regents in encouraging the foundation to accept the Pershing College Campus. The foundation would have never accepted the Pershing College Campus if there were not that resolution by the Board of Regents. This and additional to the minutes of the Board of Regents hearing it was stated that the reason for the acceptance of the gift was to establish a SUN campus. That would